

# *The* WARCRY

Christmas = 1964

# Reiji San's



REIJI San stood at the rail of the little freighter as it cut swiftly through the water. Far behind was his beloved Japan, for the ship was sailing for European ports. He shivered in the cold wind and drew his sailor's jacket around his big shoulders, turning up the collar to protect his neck and face. He thought of the crew's warm quarters below, but no longer could he stand the smell of the *sake* (liquor) and the rough, raw jokes exchanged by his shipmates as they drank their rice wine. Here on the deck he could at least be alone.

He looked outward to the vast expanse of the sea. Just above the horizon the evening star glittered in the December sky as though it were a brilliant candle in the soft velvet of the night. It was Christmas Eve.

*So the Bethlehem star must have shone,* he thought.

A deep sigh escaped his lips and mingled with the groaning cry of the water as it resisted the strain of constant splashing against the ship's bow.

*Tomorrow will be my own first Christmas,* Reiji thought, *and what have I to offer to the Christ-Child?*

He could not persuade his shipmates even to listen to the story of Jesus. He had boarded the ship wearing his Salvation Army badge, and when the crew had asked its meaning he had plainly told them that it was *Kyu Sei Gun*, The Salvation Army. From the beginning of the voyage, his greatest desire had been to win his shipmates to Christ. The very first night they had been sitting in the lounge after the supper hour. There had been plenty of *sake*, and the men seemed in a genial mood.

"*Kyu Sei Gun*," one of the sailors had said, "let us hear you sing."

Reiji thought that at last an opportunity had come for him to hold a meeting. He hurriedly brought his song book and New Testament and urged the men to join him in singing. But the men had roared with laughter when he had given out the words, and when he had tried to sing they had outsung him with their rough songs.

On many evenings following they had gone through the same ritual, urging him to hold a meeting with them and then making him the butt of their rude jokes and their laughter. He had selected the stories he knew best about his Saviour, and although he knew they paid little attention to him, often

# Ocean-Going

## Ordeal



he continued to read even in the face of their indifference.

Recently when he had read the story of the Christ Child, Bim Masamichi had said, "If this Christmas you speak of is a day of giving, what are you giving to the Child?"

"I will have a gift," Reiji had boasted too quickly, too proudly.

"Perhaps he will catch a whale," one said.

"Or maybe a sea gull will fly into his arms," another said, laughing.

Now alone beside the cold rail, Reiji San felt a great loneliness for his corps officer—Captain Hirata. Forgetting the cold, his longing for Christian fellowship and his problems, his mind swept back to the time when he had given his heart to Christ.

He'd been a young student then. Swinging down a street in Yokohama, he had suddenly come upon a group of Salvationists. The eigh-

gone. Several of the men deeply resented his clinging to a religion which to them was a repudiation of all the filial concepts of their ancient religion. They became deliberate in their efforts to make him join them in drinking or to lose his temper or to attack them physically.

"You believe Jesus is love," they said. "Then you show us this is true by doing what we tell you."

During working hours he was given the heaviest and dirtiest of jobs. And in off-duty time the men cast their clothing at him to be washed, gave him their shoes to be polished and ordered him to clean their bunks.

Often he was tempted to resist

act it out for us. It is the story of your Jesus washing the feet of His followers. You have talked endlessly of doing a special thing for your Jesus on His birthday. We have arranged something for you!"

With a loud, drunken laugh, he turned to the others in the room. "Show him, men!" he shouted.

There was a great movement of tables and chairs, and on a bench along the wall Reiji saw three men sitting with bared feet and legs. One had covered his feet with heavy syrup from the galley. Another had rubbed into his limbs thick grease from the engine room. A third stretched out his legs, showing that they were crusted with a thick mixture of flour and water.

"While you have been on deck dreaming, we have been working," cried Nobu. "See these humble men? You will wash their feet, for you must do as your Master did."

Unbelievably, the boy looked at the three men, all grinning evilly at him. He wanted to shout in their

(Continued on page 18)

By \*LT.-COLONEL DOROTHY D. PHILLIPS

teen-year-old country boy from Kuratsu had never seen people like these, nor ever heard such words as they spoke and sang.

Accepting the invitation of the young woman, Captain Hirata, he had knelt at the big drum and had invited the living Christ into his heart.

His family was bitterly opposed to his becoming a Christian, and he had been closely watched. When an opportunity to escape had come, Reiji had fled to Kobe and met the freighter. He had been sure that, away from his family, it would be easy to follow his Christian faith. But now his problems seemed too much for his faith to overcome.

The easy tolerance of the first days on the ship, when the crew had treated his beliefs as a joke, was

and to strike out with his fists or to return some cutting remark with equally rough words. But he could not escape from the knowledge that his life was truly Christ's.

He was rudely called back from memory's journey by an angry command from below deck.

"You, *Kyu Sei Gun*, come in now. We want some service down here."

As he stepped inside the door of the lounge, Reiji immediately felt a tension among the crew. This was the first time that Reiji had sensed a deep antagonism toward himself as an individual, and he did not know what to do.

"And how is the Jesus boy tonight?" Nobu, the one who had most ridiculed him, asked jeeringly. "We have a special job for you, my young one: Long have we listened to your silly stories, even though you thought we did not listen. One story we especially liked, and tonight you will

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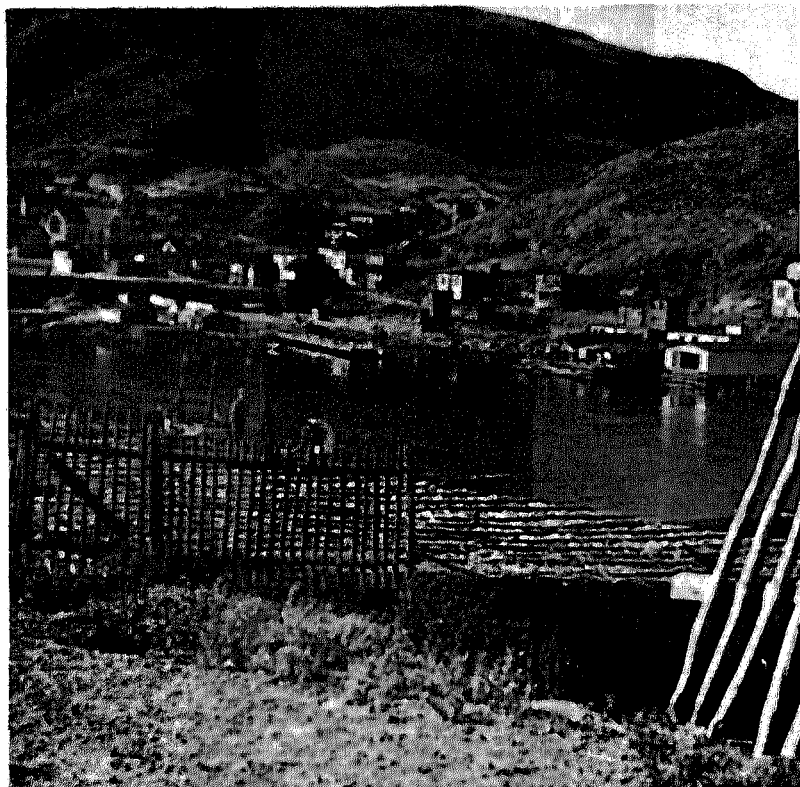
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# Outport

JIM'S ENGLISH BRIDE  
WONDERED WHY THE  
CORNET LAY IDLE. IT  
TOOK A CRISIS—AND A  
MIRACLE—TO PUT SER-  
VICE INTO ITS PROPER  
PERSPECTIVE



THE village was lit with an amber beauty. Across the hills the everchanging, sweeping, pulsating, gleaming glory of the Northern lights made the little village sleeping there on the shore of the Newfoundland inlet look like a fairly tale picture.

Most of the inhabitants of the village had been asleep for hours, but, with five days to go before Christmas, and a burden beyond all telling weighing heavily on her heart, one woman found herself looking through her cottage window, across the sleeping town, beyond the frozen harbour to the hills yonder. In sleepless bewilderment and anxiety, she found, somehow, in the restless movement of the northern lights, something strangely akin to her own searching, yearning spirit.

How different would this Christmas be from those others, now seeming aeons away, and worlds removed from this desolate spot, lit with the gold of the Aurora borealis. She recalled how the teacher in her English school had talked remotely of this physical phenomenon; little had she dreamed that there would ever be a night when, far away and lonely, her spirit would follow that dancing rhythm with such a yearning emptiness as she knew to-night.

How fine Jim had looked that day

when the Newfoundland regiment had come to her English town. She could still remember the caribou patches on his uniform. She remembered how, after they had become acquainted "over there," he had told her of the green forests of his island home, where the caribou roamed, and of quiet, old-fashioned, undisturbed villages by the sea, where for centuries generation had followed generation, a secluded, strong people, who had gained their strength in a constant battle with the ocean. She herself had come from a long line of sea-farers, and when the war was over, it did not seem hard to cross the ocean. Once the wrench of parting with her folks was over, she had looked forward eagerly to the life they were to share together, she and Jim—a life by the sea, familiar if isolated.

The day when Jim had escorted her down the gangplank of the little coastal steamer, and she had seen for the first time the clean, white cottages nestling there under the hill, it had looked like what it was to be to them—a honeymoon town. She pressed hard the hand of her "soldier-come-home," as the little Salvation Army band played "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," and the fisher folk had pressed forward shyly, but with a pride in Jim, and a

protective kindliness for his English bride.

But somehow in those first few moments there on the wharf she had sensed something which, though it had not troubled her then, had in the light of subsequent events gained significance. The white-haired bandmaster, when the band had come to the end of its somewhat faltering chords, had smiled at Jim, and, standing there by his Captain's side, had said: "Jim, lad, we're sure glad you're back. The old cornet is all shined up and waiting for you, and we'll see you Sunday morning," and the Captain had eagerly seconded the motion of welcome.

But Jim had replied with an awkward grin: "Thanks, Tom! I may be busy for a bit, and I haven't played for awhile. It may take a little while to get back to things, but I'll be around."

She could recall the half-hurt question in the old bandmaster's eyes. Of course, Jim had talked to her about his association with The Salvation Army, of how he had played in the little band. But somehow it had all seemed like a far-away, unreal story to her then. She had not known the Army, except to see its members on the street corner. Somehow Jim had seemed strangely reluctant to talk to her about it; that "Army" welcome seemed to embarrass him. As the weeks and months had gone by, it became apparent that Jim's cornet had been shined



# omecoming



in vain. He did not go to the little hall that first Sunday—nor any subsequent Sunday.

She said nothing about it, and although they received the Captain courteously when he came to visit them, neither she nor Jim accepted his oft-repeated invitation to come and share in the activities of the little corps. But there were some occasions when she caught Jim off-guard, and her woman's intuition told her that he was not happy about it. There was, for example, that Sunday afternoon when the band played for an old Salvationist neighbour. Jim had stood hidden by the cottage curtains, and she had seen a fleeting expression on his face that told her of a lingering love for that little group, but she said nothing, and they had not gone to the hall.

sleigh and its precious burden became a speck in the distance. She wished she had been well enough to go, but Jim would take care of her precious babe.

The days had been long, and the nights longer since, and she had found herself standing here so often when the village slept, following the dancing of the northern lights, and trying to figure many things. . . . What about Jim and the Army band? . . . What about God, and her own relationship with Him? . . . Was He loving, as the Captain assured her He was? and if so why were her baby and Jim away from home so many miles across the frozen sea, with five days to go before Christmas.

Then she remembered! Close to the edge of the dancing lights shone a brilliant star, and the story of an

a God whom she needed so sorely.

The northern lights danced on. How long she knelt there she could never quite be sure, but suddenly from the little radio which she had kept tuned down, came the Northern Messenger broadcast. Message after message, with comfort, or urgency, or appeal carried their tidings to many a Newfoundland home.

Her lips were still framing her need when a familiar name cut across her consciousness. "To Mrs. Jim ———, the baby is doing well, and if the weather holds clear the doctor says we may be home for Christmas." For as long as she lived she would never forget the thanks that welled from her heart, and something more . . . the dedication of that night.

It was Christmas Eve when the sled came up the bay. Late that night, as she folded a little child in her arms, the Northern Lights were reflected from a shining silver thing there under the tree, and Jim's eyes, as they looked into hers, shone too, almost as brightly as the light of moon and stars and Northern lights concentrated on a highly polished (and ready) Salvation Army cornet.

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By BRIGADIER ARTHUR PITCHER, ST. JOHN'S, NFLD.

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Then the baby came! When she had come back from the cottage hospital down the coast, the Captain and his new bride came in, and the Captain's wife beamed over the baby. "Oh, he is lovely. You must be so happy!" Then after the Captain had prayed he had said, "Of course, you will be bringing him to be dedicated soon?" Registration and dedication go together in Newfoundland, and because it was necessary, and everyone pressed her, she had taken courage one Sunday morning.

Tonight, the loveliness of that simple dedication meant much to her, for she would never forget how, on that cold wintry night—ten days ago now—she had awakened in the night with her mother-consciousness aware that all was not well—her baby's laboured breathing and burning temperature. A quick examination by an unskilled but sympathetic neighbour, then the blanketed sleigh, Jim's anxious, "Don't worry darling, it will all be right," . . . and she would never forget straining her eyes through that moonlit night until the

other Mother, of a wintry night, of an anxious father, and of a small Baby Boy came back to her through the years, and, for the first time in many a long day, she knelt to talk to

## What Would You Say?

**C**HRIST came to this earth as a little Babe,  
He slept on a bed of hay;  
He found no room in that long ago,  
Would He find room today?

Christ went about Galilee doing good,  
Seeking the lost to save;  
For this He was hung on a cross of wood  
Yet triumphed o'er the grave.

Christ stands at the door of your heart today  
Waiting to come inside.  
Will you, as the mob in Pilate's hall,  
Cry, "Let Him be crucified."?

The Christ of the manger,  
The Christ of the cross  
The Christ of the empty tomb;  
Will you say as the innkeeper said of old,  
"No room! No room! No room!"  
—Mrs. H. Noseworthy, Santa Cruz, California.

\* \* \*  
O holy Child of Bethlehem  
Descend to us, we pray;  
Cast out our sin, and enter in,  
Be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell;  
Oh, come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Immanuel!

—Phillips Brooks



# We Must “MAKE THE WORD FLESH” Again!

**OF** recent years there has been a growing movement within the Church and the community toward a national observance of the Christmas festival more in harmony with its sacred meaning. The slogan to “Keep Christ in Christmas” has had its desired effect, and the call to the nation to celebrate the Holy Feast of the Child “born to be King” has found some response. Our Christmas cards depict the Bethlehem scene, the store windows are full of mangers and wise men, and the week before Christmas, “O come all ye faithful” is heard from all kinds of unexpected places.

Was this the reason why an enterprising toy manufacturer produced a Christ Child doll, an unbreakable, washable, nine-inch model of the baby Jesus, packaged in a straw-and-satin crib with a picture of the Bethlehem manger and appropriate Biblical texts? Fortunately, the Christmas doll did not sell very well. At the time, a North American department store reported, “The Jones Store has marked Jesus Christ down fifty per cent,” and it was pointed out that this is what happens when we sentimentalize Christmas: we mark down Jesus Christ by half. There is a thought there worth pondering.

But, it is not for any sentimental reason that we plead to “Keep Christ in Christmas.” It is because Christ and the Christian idea have incomparably more to offer than anything else in the world. The famous words, attributed to Phillips Brooks, support this fact:

Here is a man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another obscure village. . . He never wrote a book. He

never held an office. He never owned a home. . . He never put his foot inside a big city. . . He had no credentials but Himself. . . Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone, and today He is the centrepiece of the human race and the leader of the column of progress.

What then is the essential meaning of the Christmas story? Christmas is the declaration of an historic event, the birth of God in the flesh, the birth of One whose background was wrapped in human obscurity, but whose life was lived in divine immensity.

yet He used so constantly His body and mind that His Gospel has been accepted by millions throughout the centuries.

We are not so busy today as we imagine. We often mistake speed and confusion of our everyday life for work, but to be busy, as our Lord was busy, is to do such things each day that will bring worthy results for the Kingdom—deeds that will stand the test of eternity.

Jesus Christ, God’s Son, who “became flesh and dwelt among us”

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*By the Chief Secretary, Colonel H. G. Wallace*

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It is obvious that John, the writer of the fourth Gospel, reflected long upon the true nature of Jesus, with whom the disciples had walked for three years, for he opens his record with his own name for Christ, the “WORD.” “In the beginning” he says, “was the WORD, and the WORD was *with* God, and the WORD *was* God.” Then comes the statement which brings Jesus right into our human scene:

**“AND THE WORD BECAME FLESH AND DWELT AMONG US.”**

The truth of God moved into humanity through a living personality. God became flesh and came and lived WITH us. By doing this, our Lord set us, who are Christ-men and women, an example of concentrated and purposeful service for our Heavenly Father. Jesus lived only thirty-three years, and only one-tenth of that time was devoted wholly to the task of Messiahship;

also set us an example by the beauty of His life, by the purity of His character, by the happiness of His personality, by His poise in the presence of tragedy, and by His reliance on spiritual powers.

Are we sure that we have written on our inner life these truths of God which the Babe of Bethlehem brought to earth from His Father’s heart? If not, we should determine this Christmastide that “WE MUST MAKE THE WORD FLESH AGAIN,” and as we dwell among men, make every idea shown in His life known to others.

## VALEDICTORY

**I**N this his final Christmas edition of THE WAR CRY, the retiring Editor-in-Chief, Lt.-Colonel Herbert Wood, desires to thank all who have contributed towards making this and other issues of inspiration and blessing. He hopes that the readers will not only find interest in the stories and messages, but something that will help them spiritually.

# "Let Us Now Go"

*Let us now go even unto Bethlehem— (Luke 2:15).*

**T**HESE words reveal the beauty of a spiritual impulse in response to what in essence was a command, for it is recorded that the angel said to the shepherds, "And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Immediately these men reacted and said, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger."

An eminent psychologist has written: "I have sought in the careers of great and of everyday people the inner springs that make for successful living. There are two which seem to me of prime importance: the first is hard work, governed by cool, logical thoughtfulness; the other is sudden, warm, impulsive action."

Admitting that he could not name a single person of true accomplishment who has not forged success out of brains and hard work, he made the striking assertion that "most of the high spots and many of the lesser successes in their careers stem from impulses promptly turned into action."

Now one of the lovely characteristics of this season is the way that so many people throughout the world are stirred to action by good impulses. As at no other time of the year evidence abounds of kindly thought, friendly word and generous deed. The spirit of man reaches out to his fellow creature in peace and good will with a generous desire to go and serve.

It may well be that all of us who follow the Lord need to give more thought to our spiritual impulses as part of our devotional exercises and our service for the people. God speaks with "the still small voice" or, as the annotation in the Bible puts it, "with the sound of a gentle stillness" and so often there is the emergence of a divine leading in the soul.

Alas, so frequently many of these beautiful impulses are stifled and the inner radiance is dimmed. It may not be as fully understood as it ought to be that, as one has said, "Every time a resolve or fine glow of feeling evaporates without bearing fruit, it is worse than a chance lost; it works to hinder future emotions from taking the normal path of discharge." How true this is in the spiritual realm!

Let us now go in spirit and as pilgrims to Bethlehem and thus obey our inner impulses. This must not



ent that there is an increasing pressure of the Spirit throughout the Church ecumenical—of which the Army is an integral part—in respect to individual witness and service.

The danger of being absorbed in modern pursuits of pleasure to the detriment of caring for others is known to us all. Many sincere Christians, for instance, are seeing that the motor-car, which can become a means mostly of self-pleasing indulgence, should be dedicated to the service of God and a portion of the costs and time usage put aside for the less fortunate.

Yet again, the question of the many hours listening to the radio and watching television—far in excess of time for reasonable relaxation—is becoming more and more

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By the Territorial Commander, Commissioner Edgar Grinstead

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be a stay-at-home Christmas in the sense of undue preoccupation with personal interests or a surfeit of physical pleasures. Such a pattern of celebrations can surely become a rebuke to us.

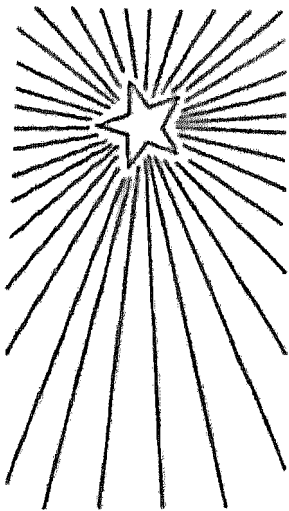
The remembering of others and their needs as we, too, kneel before the cradle will be the natural outcome of our pilgrimage and adoration; and, if we are sincere, there will be a response in action.

The Christmas pilgrimage should be a pointer to our obligation at all times to serve the people. The sad and lonely, the sick and suffering and the perplexed and anxious are all around us. There are still vast numbers of souls that are "out there, where the darkness reigns, out there." It is becoming appar-

a concern to true followers of Christ. Such matters, and others that could be named, not only militate against our devotional exercises, but impinge upon our pledged service of a personal character.

In conclusion, it remains to be stated that our spiritual visit to the scene of the Nativity should be an occasion of sacred vows and "taking up arms" again in the war against evil.

As a teenager I heard the Founder give his last public address in the *Royal Albert Hall*. Among other things he said, "While there is one dark soul without the light of God, I'll fight." May our pilgrimage this Christmastide act as a further spur to action in the greatest cause of all—the redemption of mankind.



# The Star Still

NO MATTER HOW DARK THE NIGHT OF  
YOUR HEART, IF YOU HAVE FAITH A  
RADIANT STAR WILL PIERCE THE GLOOM

IT is no small task to bring comfort to the elderly folk who find themselves in the hospital at Christmastime. A number of our elderly Eventide Home family were there, and they could not share with us the various entertainments that kind friends had arranged. That was why I was glad I had found the star still shining in my sky after a period of darkness.

I have always had trust, but trust is like a candle—it burns brightly at times, and, at other times, it wavers and sometimes it almost goes out. On my way to the hospital to visit our sick guests, I was thinking of this. Then, I recalled again those beautiful girls taking part in the Christmas pageant.

The lights were dimmed, and there was the "guardian of the altar fire," clothed in a lovely white, satin gown, standing behind a table, on which was placed a large candle, its brilliant light shining down upon the audience even as a lone star shines on a dark night. Up the aisle came the girls, dressed in different colours to represent Christian virtues. They carried candles that were to be ignited from the main candle.

I vividly remember Ethel coming toward the altar, her golden ringlets shining in the light of the candle, and her eyes expressing eagerness to do her part well. The word TRUST came into view, painted in bold letters on the sash that hung from her shoulder. She held her candle up to the "guardian of the altar fire," but it just would not light! Finally a little flame began to glow and she sheltered it with her hand, but it

went out. Several times she tried, yet still the candle would not burn. I saw a large tear make its way down her rosy cheek, falling at last upon the word she represented. Finally, she mastered the difficulty, and took her place upon the platform to portray the fact that TRUST once again at Christmas time had come to the hearts of men.

Like Ethel, I had found it hard to re-light trust at times, but then, when

this living the Christian life? My wife and I always believed in being kind to others, but now"—his voice quivered and his eyes filled with tears—"now, I can't even do anything! I haven't even the strength to care for the one I love! It just doesn't seem to be fair!"

What was I to say to bring some comfort to Mr. G . . . ? I must tell him how God had helped me to see His star. I began to speak first of

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BY ELSIE JARRETT, NIAGARA FALLS, ONT\*

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the darkness of fear and anxiety had almost overwhelmed me, I had found that God's star was still shining for me, and I was made glad again.

As I made my way to the hospital not only was I pleased that the parcels in my arms were so beautifully wrapped, I rejoiced also that my life was wrapped in the goodness and mercy of God. I suppose that was why, as I went from bed to bed, I read the Twenty-Third Psalm. My heart seemed to be saying "Amen" to all, but especially to the last verse: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

It seemed that the ones I read it to entered into the meaning of the psalm, too—all, except Mr. G . . . He listened quietly, then he said: "Sometimes it's hard to believe—I mean, that goodness and mercy follow us all our life. Look at me, here I am in this bed at Christmas with a heart attack. At this very hour, my dear wife lies helplessly crippled in a nursing home. Does it pay off—

all about the Christmas party at a big hotel for our guests.

"It was a wonderful occasion," I told him. "You should have seen the lovely dresses the ladies wore, and how the men looked in their very best suits. You should have seen how kind the club-members were to all the residents, graciously escorting each one to his or her place in that spacious dining room. Could anyone's sky be dark on such an occasion? Why, all aches and pains of old-age were forgotten as the band played and the timbrellists took part.

"Then the speaker (an Army officer) told about the dark night when Jesus was born—dark for the poor Israelites, who, oppressed by Roman rule, looked for the promised king, whom Simeon was to call 'the consolation of Israel.' But though the sky was dark on the night of Christ's birth, a star shone forth to let the people know that God still cared. And Mr. G . . . , the speaker repeated several times as though it was meant especially for me—'No matter how dark your sky may be, there is always a star.'"

I went on to tell the patient that I began to look for the star in my own life. Then at the party, a dear

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\*Mrs. Major Elsie Jarrett and her husband are stationed at the Army's Eventide Home at Niagara Falls.



# hines

elderly lady had come up to me and put her hand in mine and said: "You've been so kind to me, I can't express my gratitude in words!" Before I could say anything she was gone. That made my darkness less dense.

"It was then, Mr. G . . . that my little candle of trust began to glow again. You know, 'being good' doesn't give us a 'stand-in' with God, so that we are saved from pain and suffering. These sad experiences come to both the good and the bad. They come because these bodies of ours get old, and the parts start to wear out. But no one can take away from you the beauty of character that shines forth from your face."

"Perhaps you need to realize (I went on) that God still works miracles for us. This truth was impressed upon me through a little story that was told at our Auxiliary Christmas party. Would you like to hear it?"

My friend nodded his head.

## A Child's Dearest Wish

"One of the residents at the Eventide Home was chosen to be Santa Claus; he had often played the part for Eaton's when he was a younger man. When that room in our home had been the children's ward of the Niagara Falls hospital, a little blue-eyed girl, who was not expected to live, was a patient there. Her parents were to give her anything she wanted because she was doomed, anyway. What did she want more than anything else? She wanted to see Santa Claus!

"Our man was at Eaton's, cheering all the healthy boys and girls who visited the store, when he got a message to go to the hospital. He took a couple of pretty dolls from the store shelf and hurried to the little girl. Soon he was leaning over the crib, looking into her pale, thin face. 'Do you know who I am?' he said. Her big brown eyes looked up at his rosy face, and her tiny hand reached out, 'You're Santa Claus.'

"Do you know, Mr. G . . . that little girl—much to the amazement of her doctor—began to recover after she had seen Santa! She is a grown woman today, with a family of her



THE WRITER OF THE ACCOMPANYING story—Mrs. Major Jarrett—with some of the guests at the Army's Eventide Home at Niagara Falls, Ont., displaying the lovely gifts they have made or acquired during their Christmas festivities.

own. Was Santa the star in the dark sky of that little girl? I believe he was!

"Yes, Mr. G . . . your sky does seem dark. Perhaps you wonder if there is any star in your sky at all. But remember what the speaker said at the party: 'There is no sky so dark that there is no star.' It could be a kind neighbour, a loving son, the man in the bed next to you, the

nurse who brings your medications. It could be . . ."

I did not finish what had come to my mind. Perhaps he might think I was presumptuous, but I took his hand and held it firmly, I prayed for his healing. I thanked God that there was still a star shining for him. And I heard Mr. G . . . say—"Thank God!" Once again the candle of trust had been re-lit at the Christmas altar.

## THE ABANDONED TREE

A SAD little sight I saw today,  
As down the street I went my way—  
A Christmas tree in an alley lay;  
No longer wanted 'twas thrown away,  
Its fragrant branches no longer gay,  
An emblem of Christmas Day.

Beautiful tree, on Christmas morn,  
(Wonderful day, when Christ was born,)  
Branches all laden with treasures rare,  
Faces all glowing with happiness there;  
Smiling on rich food and Yuletide fare  
This wonderful Christmas tree.

Now it lies there all forlorn  
As I passed by that frosty morn;  
In our hearts it still holds a place,  
Its fragrance, beauty and its grace,  
From lacy branches to sturdy base—  
Beautiful Christmas tree.

—Irene Forsythe, Ottawa

## LIGHT EVERLASTING

WHAT is it that we celebrate,  
As Advent comes and goes each year?  
The birth of One who doth create  
The Light which lessens every fear.

How did the Bethlehem shepherds know  
Where they would find the Holy Child?  
'Twas told by angels, in whose glow,  
The light of starry sky seemed mild.

How came the Magi from afar  
To offer Christ their gifts most rare?  
Their way was lighted by a star,  
And they, their common joy did share.

How may we keep the Christmas lights  
Aglow within our hearts for aye?  
Through all the coming days and nights,  
We will, the Spirit of Love, portray.

—Nettie Edmonds, Toronto

# Christmas is more than

**W**ITHOUT doubt there are those who for some time have been calculating the number of days to Christmas.

Possibly harassed supermarket managers have been studying their graphs which, based on comparative figures, indicate when they may expect the peak of the shopping rush. Maybe a dad or mum is even now working out how much time he or she has left to complete the list of family presents. And some small boy, his mind hardly on the current class lesson, is trying to remember how many days there are in the month and, on his fingers, to tot up how long it will be before he can don the space-suit he has ordered from you-know-who.

Perhaps those warning notices have already begun to appear in your local paper. Thirty more shop-

ping days to Christmas. Twenty more . . . Fifteen . . . Ten . . . Five. . .

It seems that even with this happiest of holiday seasons there is an inescapable time factor. No evangelist could exhort us more earnestly than do our main street stores to remember that what we would buy we must buy quickly. There is a last or final shopping day after which the present which has not been purchased must remain unpurchased. The Christmas card which has not been sent must remain unsent. The deadline once passed, what has not been done by way of Christmas preparations must remain forever undone. There is an element of judgment even with our shopping. All our desire to remember some long-forgotten friend is in vain if we don't think of him until Christmas day is half done. We've had it by then—and so has he!

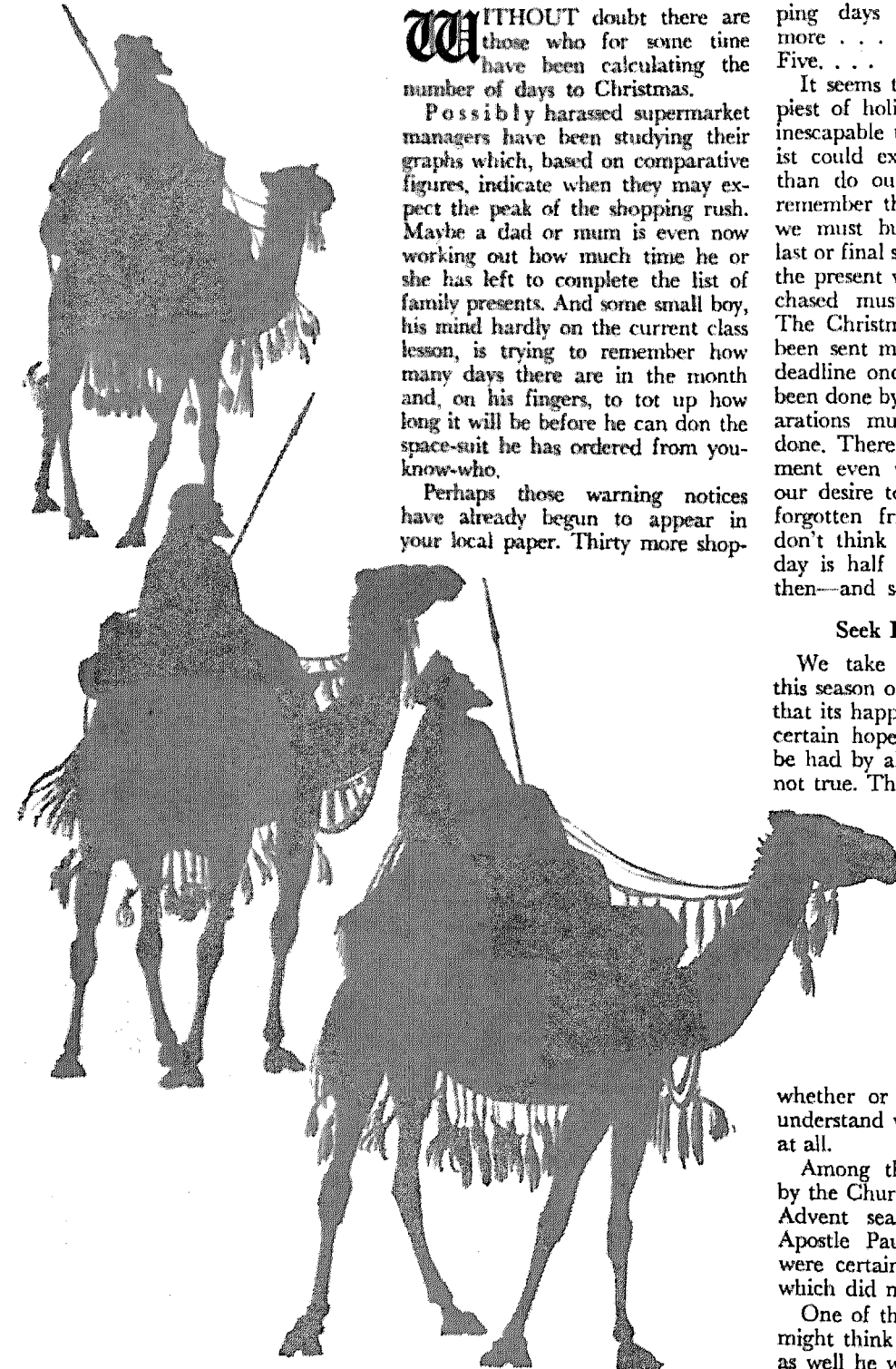
## Seek Its True Meaning

We take too casual a view of this season of the year if we suppose that its happiness rests upon the uncertain hope that a good time will be had by all, for manifestly that is not true. The virtue of Christmas as high festival lies in the fact that it speaks of what God has done in visiting and redeeming His people, and our happiness lies in acknowledging Him whom God has sent to be our Lord and Saviour. For our attitude to Jesus will reveal whether or not we have begun to understand why there is a Christmas at all.

Among the Scriptures appointed by the Church to be read during the Advent season is one where the Apostle Paul maintains that there were certain opinions or judgments which did not bother him at all.\*

One of these was what other men might think of him—and it was just as well he was somewhat indifferent

A NAUGHTY  
MESSAGE  
BY THE ARMY'S  
INTERNATIONAL  
LEADER—  
GENERAL  
FREDERICK  
COUTTS



# in Feasting

on this point, for he was called a good many hard things in his time.

Neither was he troubled about maintaining a high opinion of himself. He was too much of a realist to be eaten up by a sense of his own importance. But, he went on, "he that judgeth me is the Lord." That is to say, he was concerned about how he stood in relationship to Jesus.

## He Is Our Judge

So must we all be—for He whose coming we remember at this time of the year is not just a Baby about whom we sing sentimental lullabies for a few days in December and then forget for the rest of the year. It is by Him we are judged, and that is one of the soberer truths of which this season reminds us. Like the number of shopping days to Christmas which bid us make up our mind what we want to buy while we still have time, we have to make up our mind about Jesus while yet—in the old evangelical phrase—we are in time and out of eternity. There is a deadline with faith as well as with the shopping list.

Those whose memories go back like mine to the first world war may recall one of the Studdart Kennedy's poems in which he imagines a Cockney soldier, whose life had been far from blameless, dreaming that he was in the other world and facing the Judge who knows all. Said he:

*And day by day and year by year  
My life came back to me.*

*I see'd just what I were, and all  
I'd 'ad the chance to be.*

"I see'd just what I were." That is just what Jesus does to us. In His presence we see ourselves as we truly are.

That is what happened when He came as the Babe of Bethlehem.

\*"For my part, if I am called to account by you or by any human court of judgment, it does not matter to me in the least. Why, I do not even pass judgment on myself. . . . My judge is the Lord. . . . For He will bring to light what darkness hides and disclose men's inward motives" (1 Corinthians 4:3-5: N.E.B.).

At the news of One born to be king, Herod's first concern was for the safety of his own throne. That mattered to him more than anything else in the world. To preserve it he was prepared for butchery. The coming of Jesus threw up in harsh relief his own savage selfishness.

The religious leaders whom Herod consulted showed themselves indifferent to the coming of the King for, though they knew their sacred Scriptures off by heart, they never dreamed for one moment that what they were quoting was actually happening under their own eyes.

Shepherds and wise men came to worship and, when they found Him who was born to be king, they laid before Him their gifts. All these men rose or fell by their attitude to Jesus.

## An Ancient Prophecy

This is what a wise old man named Simeon said would happen. Speaking to Mary he foretold that "this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel." My only comment would be—not only "in Israel."

Judgment of this kind can be somewhat merciless. Yet we can only blame ourselves when we ask for it. Those of us who know our Dickens will recall how Mrs. Skewton, mother of the second Mrs. Dombey, tried to preserve the appearance of youth in old age, but one day she collapsed. Then, runs the story, "they took her to pieces in very shame and put the little that was real of her on a bed."

"The little that was real." That could be said of more of us than poor Mrs. Skewton.

*Ah, Lord, before Thou dost become our Judge, persuade us to accept Thee as Saviour!*

The management of THE WAR CRY is grateful to the Concordia Films (of the Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo., U.S.A.) for permission to reproduce the painting used on the front cover of this issue.—Ed.





# Believing, With Reservations

**W**E were all sitting around the supper table talking about Christmas, toys, Santa Claus, and other things relating to Christmas, when suddenly a little voice said, with great emphasis: "Santa Claus is not real! He's just one of the boys from home!" This surprising statement from a lad just turned five made us all laugh heartily. Obviously, he had been listening to a famous crooner singing "Christmas in Killarney" which contains the lines:

"And Santa Claus, you know, of course,  
Is one of the boys from home."

Yet, a day or two earlier, I had taken this little fellow for a winter's walk, and I had asked him where Santa Claus lived, and he replied instantly: "At the North Pole." Upon further questioning, I discovered that, in his young mind, Santa Claus was more than a fairy-tale character, but was not as "real" as Jesus, for when I asked him what Christmas really meant he stated, with an air of finality: "It's Jesus' birthday."

After reflecting on these two incidents, the thought occurred to me that this small boy believed in Santa Claus "with some reservations." He could say with one breath that Santa actually lived at the North Pole, and, shortly later, respect the words of the crooner. To him it was only important to believe in jolly old St. Nick during the Christmas season. On the other hand, Jesus was Someone who loved him all the year around, Someone he could sing about every day, Someone who came to earth and died on the cross, so that he could be a good boy and some day go to Heaven.

A right perspective is important from childhood to old age. Unfortunately, the tragedy of our time is that so many people have a warped perspective. The "adult Santa Claus" (feasting, drinking, gift-exchanging) has superseded the advent of Jesus

Christ. People everywhere decorate evergreen trees with tinsel and candy-canes but say little or nothing about the Christ of Christmas, who in manhood, was nailed to a tree on Golgotha's hill.

Many folk gather around the tree Christmas morning and share that delightful experience of suspense and excitement as their little darlings open the presents, but do not take the time to pray with their family to a God of love, who gave Jesus Christ to be the Saviour of the world. In almost every home, big turkey-dinners

Father," and also: "I and My Father are One."

To keep Christmas, and yet not to receive Christ as Saviour, is to trifle with the mercy of God. The Bible message of Christmas is very clear:

"In the beginning was the Word . . . and the Word was God . . . And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us . . . as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name."

How eagerly little hands reach out for that special Christmas gift! What a wonderful surprise when it is opened. How often little feet run

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By CAPTAIN WILLIAM BROWN, Brockville, Ont.

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are served to hungry families, but so few ever think of feasting on the manna from Heaven, and partaking of "the bread of life."

What is happening to our sense of values in this so-called Christian nation? Is it that we are too sophisticated and intellectual to accept the Incarnation? Or is it that we believe in Jesus Christ, as the little boy did in Santa Claus, "with some reservations"? Although no one would be so sacrilegious as to say that the real Personality of Christmas is "just one of the boys from home" yet many believe that Jesus Christ is "just one of the great men in history." They believe Him to be a Man of unusual ability and vision; a great Leader in the column of progress; a mighty Teacher of truth; but emphatically deny that He is very God—and thus make Him a liar. Jesus said: "He that has seen Me has seen the

to mommy or daddy and express joyful thanks with hugs and kisses. Reader, if you will receive in faith "the gift of God" through Jesus our Lord, the light of God's love and grace will be such a wonderful surprise that you will want to run to Him, and gladly thank Him for His unspeakable joy and perfect peace.

The gifts our children enjoy cost them nothing. How glad I am that Jesus paid the price of sin so that I may receive His free gift.

"There was no other good enough  
To pay the price of sin;  
He only could unlock the gate  
Of Heaven, and let us in."

This Christmastide, may you be able to say with the little boy, "It is Jesus' birthday"—not just because the Bible teaches it, but because you know the birth of Christ's marvellous love and saving grace in your own heart.

# At Christmas I Remember

**I**N vivid recollection my mind goes back some years. I was a boy of ten, living in a small Nova Scotia village. Poverty prevailed in those depression days; food, clothing, and fuel were scarce. My father, a gardener, was unemployed during the fall and winter months. Family allowance, unemployment insurance, and other government benefits were unheard of. During the cold winter months mother patched and re-patched clothes for her nine children. On one occasion I recall her taking an old overcoat apart and making me a warm jacket for the winter.

On the screen of my mind I can also see her making socks from the arms of worn-out sweaters so we could attend the village school. Many times mother would go to the cupboard to get something for a meal, only to find it empty; some evenings our supper consisted merely of dry bread and apples. We did not complain; hard times had to be accepted. Tomorrow would be a better day. Perhaps it would snow and father would get a day's work shovelling, and buy some meat with the money.

Another Christmas was approaching, but there was little to assure us of the joy of that event, although the snow and the gaily-decorated store windows made us aware of the season. The ice on the pond was thick and smooth. I craved a pair of skates. I knew it seemed an impossible wish, yet I believed a miracle could happen. I wasn't altogether selfish, but prayed that some gifts might come to gladden the hearts of my sisters and brother, as well.

My heart was heavy. My parents would not be going shopping this Christmas. Father didn't even have the money for cereal and milk, much less for gifts. My spirit within me sank to a new low as I contemplated a Christmas without gifts and treats. I began to wonder what Christmas was really all about. "Is there a God?" my young heart asked. "If

By  
Captain  
Donald Randall,  
Barrie, Ont.

so, why has He deserted us? If He is real, does He love the poor and needy? Can He know about our poverty and desire our happiness?"

I knew very little then about God, and I had yet to experience the true peace and joy to be found in the Christ of Christmas. I had yet to learn that the Babe of Bethlehem was the source of true happiness. This explains why I was bitter, and why I found each Christmas disappointing and frustrating. I thought I wanted toys, but my heart really craved spiritual gifts.

The morning before Christmas father called the family together and sadly explained why there would be no presents this Christmas. He had been unable to secure any work during December. Many in the village would be experiencing the same disappointment. When father broke the news, no one cried; we knew that would only make things worse. Besides, mother's quiet words, saying she had a big ham and potatoes and cranberry sauce for Christmas dinner helped a bit.

Christmas Eve was a dark and hopeless night. Mother did not ask the children to go to bed early because she knew that Santa Claus would not be calling. I was gazing at the little tree, especially noticing the empty space beneath it, and perhaps questioning God and His love, when I heard a loud knock at the door. I sprang from my chair to



open it. There stood my cubmaster. His face was beaming. "Merry Christmas!" he said, "is this where the Randalls live? I have a large box of gifts for you!" He talked to my parents for a couple of minutes, then shouted again, "Merry Christmas to you all!" and was gone. I felt surely he was an angel from Heaven, and that God had sent him to our house.

It was a wonderful box. There were dolls for each of my sisters, games we could play, and trucks and cars for my brother and me. No skates, but we didn't mind! God had not forgotten us and I wanted to thank Him, but I didn't even know how to pray!

Hard times have come again and again, but God has come to our aid many times. Some years later, when I discovered the real meaning of Christmas and learned that Jesus Christ was God's Love-gift to mankind, I thanked Him from my heart, not only for sending my cubmaster at Christmas, but for giving to me the greatest Gift of all—eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Reader, make this the happiest Christmas of your life. Open your heart to Christ, He will transform your very life.



# The Newsboy



FOUR YEARS  
IS A LONG  
TIME, AND  
JIM WAS  
JUSTIFIED IN  
WONDERING  
WHAT HIS  
RECEPTION  
WOULD BE  
LIKE

JIM Tremblay turned the corner of Fourth Street and headed toward town. The neon lights flashed in the distance. The streets were aglow with Christmas decorations.

Jim didn't see these things. If he had they wouldn't have made a difference anyway. He was thinking of the last Christmas he had been with his family, four years ago. How time flew!

He was so intent on his thoughts that he didn't see the newsboy in the middle of the sidewalk.

"Hey mister! You knocked my papers into the snow. I can't sell them with all that mud and slush on them!"

"Sorry kid. Here, let me pay you for them!"

Jim handed him five dollars. The boy brightened up. He didn't mind the loss of the papers and he was being paid far more than they were worth.

"How old are you boy?" asked Jim.

"Eight sir, and thanks . . . thanks a million!"

Off he went, leaving the papers in the snow. Eight years old, thought Jim; eight, same age as Brian. Jim looked back. The newsboy was down the street, staring at him. He seemed puzzled, frightened—almost as if he had seen a ghost.

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*By Captain Elmer Pavey, Bermuda*

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Thinking of Brian did nothing to cheer Jim up. He wondered what Brian looked like now. He wondered if he were as big as that newsboy. He had been so small when he left.

It was Christmas Eve, and all day Jim had been thinking of his wife Joan, and his little boy Brian. Four years . . . four years. The words kept going over and over in his mind, keeping rhythm with his step.

Yes, thought Jim, four years ago we were a happy family. We didn't have much, it is true, but still we had fun together. We enjoyed decorating the tree. Then Christmas Day,

opening the presents first thing in the morning; Brian with his new wagon, how proud he had been! All gone now, thought Jim, all gone!

For the past four years Jim had been travelling. Joan and he had had a terrible argument one night. They had been at a party, returning home late. It was over such a trivial thing. Jim admitted now that he had acted childishly—then to run away! He realized now that he had made a terrible mistake.

What was it that made him so restless tonight? He had been back in the home town for three days now. Several times he had almost called home. At the airport, he had had the phone up to his ear, ready to dial the number, but he had slammed the receiver back on to the hook in disgusted uncertainty. Joan would probably want nothing to do with him after all this time. He was a "heel"—no one needed to tell him that.

Jim was in the heart of the city now. Gaiety was the keynote of the occasion. Everywhere shoppers were finishing their last minute shopping. Everyone seemed to be smiling. The store windows were alight with decorations. A department store was broadcasting carols. One was "Away in a Manger," and he felt a pang as he remembered how Brian had loved that hymn. It was a long time

since he had really felt the Christmas spirit; four years to be exact.

He must see Joan and Brian. His mind was made up now. Even if he was out of his wife's life altogether, at least he had to clear his own conscience by making an appearance. Even if she doesn't forgive me, thought Jim, I will tell her of the anguish I have felt.

He slipped into a store. Suddenly he had become a last-minute shopper himself. What to get? Quickly he made a few purchases.

In a short time he was nearing the house on Elm Street. What memories were coming to him now:

# as Brian!

Johnson's store on the corner; the hill Brian used to coast down on his sleigh; and then, the house. . . .

He wondered if he should have phoned first. What if Joan had company? What if she were out? Maybe she would slam the door in his face. She had every right to hate him.

A thousand and one fears gripped his heart and troubled his mind. If it were not for the gifts under his arm, he might have kept on going.

It seemed an eternity until the door was opened. Jim's carefully prepared speech was forgotten.

There was Joan, standing before him, as lovely as ever. "Jim," she exclaimed, "Oh Jim, won't you come in?" He saw the tears starting to trickle down her cheeks. There was a lump in his own throat. "I knew you would come tonight," said Joan. "I prayed you would, how I prayed you would!"

Then Jim saw him—the newsboy he had knocked over! "Don't tell me you're Brian! I was too engrossed to realize . . . I can't believe it!"

"Brian came running home, crying his heart out. All he could say

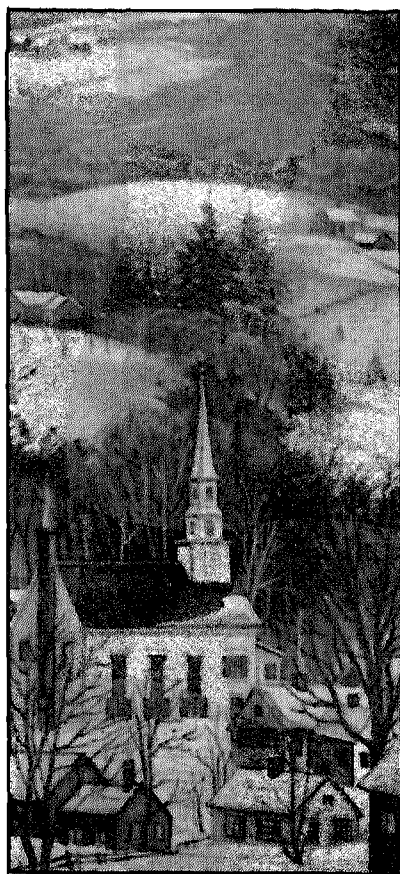
was that he had seen his father!" Joan went on. "I didn't believe him at first, then I began to hope and pray. Oh, Jim, this is your place—won't you stay?"

"Joan, how wrong I have been." Jim put his arm on her shoulder. "Here are a few little gifts I bought in town—there's something after all to this thing we call 'the Christmas Spirit.' If you and Brian will have me, I want to stay . . . and we'll do what we used to do on Christmas Day when we were first married. We'll go to the service in the morning. Can we do that Joan?"

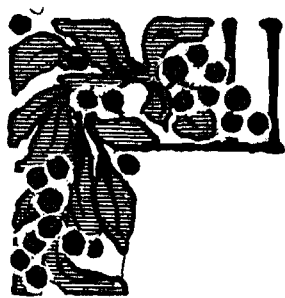
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Jim Tremblay, his wife Joan, and their boy Brian, returned from church the next morning—Christmas morning—their faces radiant with happiness. The minister had used the text, "And when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy."

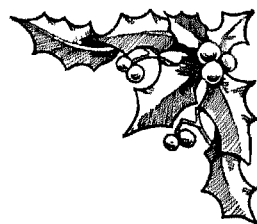
Of all the members of that congregation on that beautiful, crisp Christmas morning, at least three knew that Christmastime held forth



a special time of the joy known only to those who love the Lord—and one another.



## HOLLY, IVY AND MISTLETOE



**M**ANY of the customs we observe at Christmas time today come from pagan rites to the sun. Ancient peoples in Egypt, Persia and southern Europe all worshipped the sun. Since their lives and livelihood depended on its course, they held elaborate ceremonies to their sun gods at the winter solstice.

In the north the sun grew weaker and farther away in mid-December. The people held feasts and built great bonfires to bring the sun back to life. The idea of the sun's return-

ing seemed to Christians to speak of Christ's coming as the Light of the world.

The Druids worshipped the mistletoe, gathered it in special ceremonies, and hung it in their homes. The Saxons used holly, ivy and bay. These customs later clustered around the celebration of Christ's birthday. Burning the yule log in England and lighting candles became part of the Christmas celebration.

Who lit the first Christmas tree? The Romans may have started the idea when they hung a fir tree with lit candles at their annual Saturnalia—week-long winter festival dedicated to the sun god. They decorated their homes with green boughs and exchanged presents.

Accounts persist that Martin Luther introduced the tree aglow

with candles as a Christian observance. The Christmas tree was introduced in America by German Lutheran immigrants in the 1840s. The evergreens came to mean our eternal salvation through Christ. The gifts symbolize God's great Gift to mankind, His Son, Christ.

Hymns and chants in Latin were the music of the early Christmases, and not until the thirteenth century were carols sung. These new songs were written in every European language, in festive yet familiar style.

Today Christmas is rich in carols and bells, candles and gifts, evergreens and fires—all to celebrate Christ's birth.



# The Midnight Gift-plane

**T**HE Eskimo children had been so looking forward to the enchantment of Christmas Eve, but it looked like being a pretty dismal one. In this treeless land of eternal ice we made our own tree. I had a piece of driftwood I used as a walking-stick when we went hiking. To this I tied at right angles to it some smaller pieces of wood. Soon we had our own Christmas tree, and, as it grew before our eyes, the children stared in silent wonder. It was not much of a tree, but, for most of the children, it was their first one.

The girls took one of their most precious possessions, a department store catalogue, and from this they cut out pictures of dolls and trains, and boxes of chocolates and gaily coloured clothing. All these were carefully tied on the tree. Each child had his turn at tying a gift on.

In a crevice of ice we built a creche and Amee, one of our older girls, contributed part of a caribou skin. From this a nice new doll was made. This was to be the Christ Child, and it was carefully placed in a cardboard cradle made by the

boys who had toiled diligently at it.

Our little Christmas tree was carried out and placed in a sheltered place close to the creche. Perhaps the poorest Christmas tree in all the world, but to us the grandest.

We stood around it and sang "Silent Night" and "Happy Birthday, Dear Jesus," a favourite chorus of the children. In that brief, heavenly hour all the glory of the City of God was close to us.

I had little in the way of gifts to give the children. A few biscuits and some jelly beans carefully hidden away since last summer, but they added much to the celebration of the day. During our brief summer season a Finnish whaler came close to us and left with me some comic papers, which I gave out. How the children treasure those things!

And so Christmas Day passed. When I got into my sleeping bag at night, for the first time in years, I wept. Not for myself, but for my children. They were so happy and they had so little. They were still singing long after they should have been asleep. Two thousand years ago a Babe made a woman cry, but, ever since, the world has been singing at Christmas time.

And so the actual Day passed, but Christmas was not over for us. Love is no footnote in the biography of God; it is the very heart of God, and those who worship come under His love and none are forgotten.

I had been asleep for perhaps two hours when I heard one of the boys call me. Pointing upwards he said, "Plane, plane!" Going to the door I looked up at the millions of stars above us and listened. Sure enough, I could hear the hum of a plane. I wondered who it could be, as few planes visit this area. Perhaps some poor fellow who had lost his way and was looking for a place to land.

Soon we saw a white flare drop. This meant that the aviators were looking for some place. About twenty minutes later another flare blazed through the sky. This one seemed to be closer to where we were. Then a period of anxious waiting, with only the hum of the plane's engines to be heard. Then, very close overhead, we saw a green flare. That meant that a package was being dropped. We could see the big white parachute slowly open, and, gently, a parcel came down about a mile from where we stood.

The children were all awake, crowding around the door, staring at this wonder from the sky. Hurriedly we hitched one of the dog teams to a sled, and two of the boys and I made for the green flare. Half a mile away from it lay a package. What a thrill to the boys and myself!

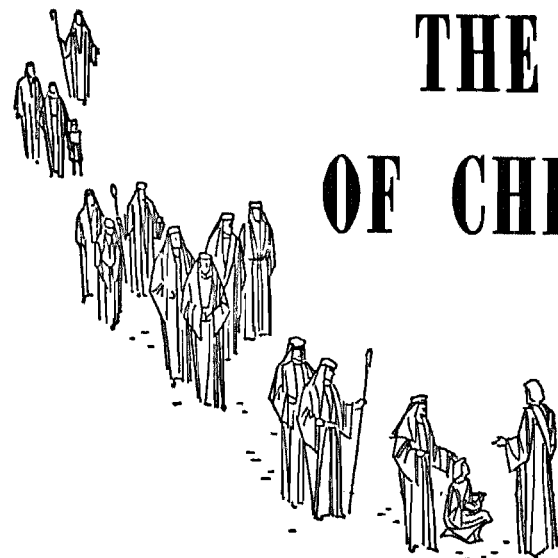
*(Continued on page 17)*



# THE CHRIST OF CHRISTMAS

By

Robert G. Lee



*"And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into Heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us." (Luke 2:15)*

**T**HOSE shepherds—poor, honest, industrious—were not leaders of armies, not expounders of philosophies, not advocates of political theories, not bankers counting piles of money—rather, just throwers of stones to keep the wolves away, watchers of their flocks. To these who were dutifully diligent in their common tasks, the good news was first announced. To the shepherds the angel of the Lord said, "Fear not . . . for unto you is born . . . a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10-11). To these same shepherds a multitude from the heavenly choir sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 2:14).

The information God gave, the shepherds wisely put into action immediately. Not the delay of a week, nor a day, nor an hour, nor a minute. The Saviour of men born in the City of David? "Let us go and see Him NOW!" Not when a more convenient time presents itself. Not after we go home and talk it over with our families. But NOW. Not after we visit again the sheep markets. But NOW. Not when we make sure no wolves will attack our sheep. But NOW. Not when we make sure no money will be lost. But NOW.

The wise men made the same improvement of their information. In a distant country they saw His star

and followed its direction, defiant of all distances, discouraged by no vast expanse, downcast by no far reach of miles. "They came with haste." To inquire after Jesus, to see Jesus, to serve Jesus, to follow Jesus is our first business—the one thing most importantly needful.

Christ was holy, undefiled, separate from sinners, fit to become sin for us because He knew no sin.

Jesus is God manifest in the flesh. Having glory with God before the world began, loved by the Father before the foundation of the world,

It was a beautifully decorated tree, with a card on it for every child at the school. A box, to us the most fascinating box of wonder in the world, lay beside it. Quickly, everything was loaded on the sled and we were heading for home.

Aware of all the excitement some of the older folks had come up from the settlement, and childhood and age mingled in happy glee around the sled.

What cries of "Oh" and "Ah" as the packages were handed out and unwrapped. Mouths filled with candy tried hard to describe each gift. Eyes full of tears looked upon dolls held close to a child's breast.

Thank God for Christmas Day! It brings back the child-heart to many who may have forgotten the holiest memories of the past.

God bless the boys of the air force who, in the midst of their own celebration, remembered us at our lonely

Jesus Christ was virgin born. When Mary, over-shadowed by the power of the highest, went down into the mysterious land of motherhood, she came back holding in her arms the eternal Son of God! Christ's virgin birth, on which rests the credibility of the Scriptures and the sinlessness of Jesus, is the Alpha of our Christian faith. Accept that, and all else rightly follows.

What was the grand design of the Saviour's birth? The redemption, by His death, of fallen, guilty, helpless men. That was why He came. "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law" (Galatians 4:4-5). He was named Jesus, because He came to "save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). There is something sublime and delightful in the name Saviour.

As the shepherds and the wise men on the first Christmas Day made haste to come to the Saviour, will you not hasten to the cross and see there the Christ who died for you?

This is the story of Christmas: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

## MIDNIGHT GIFT-PLANE

(Continued from page 16)

Arctic post. But for their kind thoughtfulness, that would have been a dismal Christmas for a hundred poor Eskimo boys and girls.

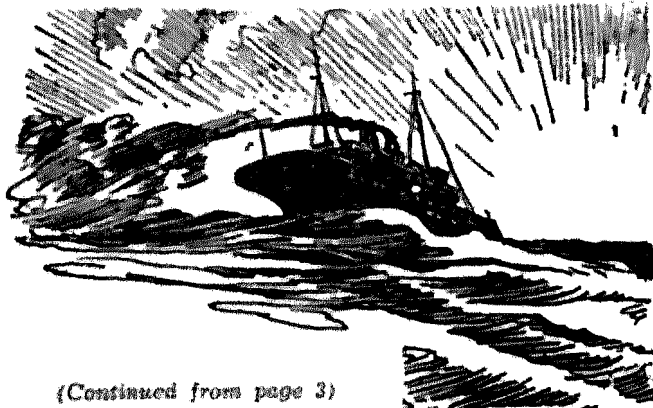
### "Peace on Earth"

**"I** HEARD the bells on Christmas day  
Their old familiar carols play,  
And wild and sweet  
The words repeat,  
Of "Peace on earth, good will to men!"

And in despair I bowed my head;  
"There is no peace on earth," I said,  
"For hate is strong  
And mocks the song  
Of peace on earth, good will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep;  
"God is not dead; nor doth He sleep!  
The wrong shall fail,  
The right prevail,  
With peace on earth, good will to men!"

—LONGFELLOW



# Reiji San's Ocean-Going Ordeal

(Continued from page 3)

faces at this masquerade of a sacred happening. He longed to dash at them and beat them with his fists. But following Nobu's words there was a dead silence in the room, and all eyes were fastened on the boy.

He turned without a word and left the lounge, returning immediately with soap and a pail filled with water and carrying a brush in his hand. The noisy breathing of the men showed the intensity of their concentration as Reiji knelt before the first man. As he stooped to lift the man's feet into the bucket, the sailor lifted one huge foot and, grabbing the boy's head, rubbed his face in the syrup.

Reiji San was silent for a moment. Then he spoke.

"I cannot wash your feet if you continue to do that," the boy said quietly.

And with no further words he silently washed the syrup from the man's feet.

The sailor with the oil on his feet, following the example of the first man, scraped grease from his legs and rubbed it into the syrup on the boy's face. Then he threw back his head and roared with laughter, expecting the others to join him. But the atmosphere in the room had begun to change, and only one or two joined feebly in the laughter.

With brush, soap and water, the silent boy tried to clean off the heavy oil. And then, as he turned to the third man, even the sound of breathing was stilled. Reiji started his task of removing the crust from those big feet in front of him.

"Look up, boy!" Big Masamichi, owner of the feet, commanded. Slowly Reiji lifted his eyes to meet those of the man who had spoken.

"Boy, I cannot understand one being so spineless as you," Masamichi

said. "You are a big young man. You have strength in your arms and your back. Yet these two months you have let us bully you, order you around and demean you. And tonight you do feet-washing such as this and do not resist. What is the matter with you? Are you so good?"

"He is a baby," one sailor called out. "He needs his mother."

"Not a baby!" shouted another, now that the silence was broken. "He is a coward, and he is afraid. He is afraid to fight."

Reiji paid no attention to their taunts. He continued to look into the eyes of the big sailor.

"You ask if I am good, Masamichi," he said. "I am not. You do not know how I have longed to strike out at all of you, even to spit on you and to tell you to do your own dirty work. Yes, I am strong and I can fight, but I will not. In jest these men say, 'Your Jesus is love,' but to me it is not a joke. He is love. I know it, for many nights I have stood on the deck and prayed that Christ would give me strength not only to serve all of you, but also to love each of you. And He has done it.

"So many times I have read the Christmas story these days because it tells of those who came to worship the Christ-Child and those who came such great distances to bring Him gifts. I am only a new Christian, and I have nothing really to offer my Christ. From the beginning of our voyage I saw that no one believed I had a real faith, so I promised the Christ that my gift for Him, at Christmas and always, would be the humble and willing devotion of my heart and life, to serve Him and to show His love. It is all I can do. I prayed to bring one of you to Him as a gift, but my prayer has not been answered."

"I cannot understand such a faith or such a love," Big Masamichi said. "I have watched you live among us, ill-treated and despised, doing the most despicable tasks without murmur. You have been able to defend yourself, but for the sake of your Christ you have accepted disgrace to lead others to Him. Boy, will you teach me how to follow Him? Will you add my life to yours as a Christmas gift for the Christ?"

A splendid joy flashed in the eyes of Reiji San as, one by one, he lifted the feet of Big Masamichi into the bucket and began to wash them.

"Masamichi San," he said, and in his voice was the sound of angels singing, "I think if you and I could go today to the Bethlehem manger and kneel beside it, the Christ-Child would be happier to see us than all the others, even though we came with empty hands. For we have given Him our hearts and our lives. These He considers the greatest of all gifts."—*The War Cry, Chicago*

## CHRISTMAS BELLS

(Tune: "Gospel Bells"—Tunebook No. 605)

As the Christmas bells are ringing  
Once again o'er all the earth,  
To proclaim the glorious tidings  
Of the blessed Saviour's birth,  
As glad hearts join to sing  
Christmas carols, old and new,  
How we thank God for the knowledge  
That their message still is true!

Christmas bells, Christmas bells,  
Spread the news from sea to sea,  
Christ has come, Christ has come,  
Bringing light and liberty.

Christ came from God, the Father,  
To a world of sin and woe,  
Through His wondrous life and teaching  
God's redeeming love to show.  
He has come to seek the lost,  
Burdened down with care and strife,  
So that whoso'er, believing,  
May have peace, eternal life.

As the shepherds bowed before Thee  
In Judea far away,  
We would bow in adoration  
On this happy Christmas day.  
To Thy name, Eternal One,  
Mighty God and Prince of Peace,  
Our loving hearts shall offer  
Songs of praise that ne'er shall cease.

—Alan H. Neelon (Lieutenant)



THE CHILDREN RIGHTLY ENJOY CHRISTMAS—IT IS THEIR RED-LETTER DAY. WHETHER THEY ARE DELIVERING CHRISTMAS GIFTS BY SLEIGH OR SINGING CAROLS, THEY EXPERIENCE SOMETHING OF THE THRILLING JOY PROCLAIMED BY THE ANGEL, WHO HERALDED THE BIRTH OF THE WORLD'S SAVIOUR: "I BRING YOU GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY" (Luke 2:10).

